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WHOLE SERIES.
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Poetry.

The Gray Swan.

"Oh tell me, sailor, tell me true,
Is my little lad, my Elihu,
A-sailing with your ship?"
The sailor's eyes were dim with dew.
"Your little lad, your Elihu?"
He said with trembling lip,
"What little lad, what ship?"
"What little lad, as if there could be
Another such a one as he!
What little lad, do you say?
Why, Elihu, that took to the sea
The moment I put him off my knee,
It was just the other day."
"The Gray Swan sailed away."
"The other day?" the sailor's eyes
Stood open with great surprise;
"The other day? The Swan?"
His heart began in his throat to rise.
"Ay, ay, sir, here in the cupboard lies
The jacket he had on."
"And so your lad is gone?"
"Gone with the Swan." "And did she
stand
With her anchor clutching hold of the
sand
For a month, and never stir?"
"Why, to be sure! I've seen from the
land,
Like a lover kissing his lady's hand,
The wild sea kissing her,
A sight to remember, sir."
"But, my good mother, do you know
All this was twenty years ago?
I stood on the Gray Swan's deck
And to that lad I saw you throw,
Taking it off, as it might be—so!
The kerchief from your neck."
"Ay, and he'll bring it back."
"And did the little lawless lad
That has made you sick and made you
sick,
Sail with the Gray Swan's crew?"
"Lawless! the man is going mad!
The best boy ever mother had;
Be sure besalved with the crew!
What would you have him do?"
"And he has never written line,
Nor sent you word, nor made you sign,
To say he was alive?"
"Hold! if 'twas wrong, the wrong is mine;
Besides, he may be in the brine,
And could he write from the grave?
Tut, man, what would you have!"
"Gone twenty years—a long, long cruise,
'Twas wicked thus your love to abuse;
But if the lad still live,
And came back home, think you you
can
Forgive him?"—"Miserable man,
You're mad as the sea—you rave,
What have I to forgive?"
The sailor twitched his shirt so blue,
And from within his bosom drew
The kerchief. She was wild.
"My God, my Father! is it true?
My little lad, my Elihu!
My blessed boy, my child!
My dead, my living child!"
Alice Carey.

Religious.

A Sunday in Leipzig.

The following is from the editor of the London Freeman:—
It was our lot the other day to book through from London to Leipzig, we travelled via Harwich and Rotterdam, and through Minden, Hannover, and Halle to this city of merchants, one of the busiest and wealthiest of German cities. Berlin, of course, is more important in the political world; Dresden far excels it in all that appertains to court and fashionable life; Hamburg rejoices in a more worldwide trade; but Leipzig holds its own among these famous competitors. Its merchants are said to be substantial men of considerable capital, while its university numbers more than 3,000 students, and is, we believe, the most flourishing of German seats of learning. Leipzig owes nothing to the beauty of surrounding scenery. The neighborhood is flat. Dreary wastes of fields, more profitable to the tiller than pleasant to the sight-seer, stretch out in

every direction. The city authorities have done their utmost to make "the desert to rejoice and to blossom as the rose," the Rosenthal, as its name, the valley of roses, implies, bearing witness to the fact that money and skill are diligently employed to supply by culture what Nature has denied to the locality. Indeed, the extensive parks, and miles of shaded walks through woods, reflect the greatest credit on the municipality. At Leipzig Martin Luther won his spurs by right knightly conflict with the shrewd and bold champion of Rome, the celebrated Eck, and the place of the disputation—now used for military purposes—is pointed out to the stranger. Here the historical student seeks out the places made memorable by the battles fought there the most notable of which was the conflict of the nations with Napoleon Bonaparte after his retreat from Moscow.

Leipzig city contains 130,000 inhabitants, and as we shall presently have occasion to point out, has grown with extraordinary rapidity. The education of children and youth is duly cared for and provided. The means of enjoying hours of leisure are placed within the reach of all. Leipzig has for centuries been the great book-mart of Europe, and the sale obtained for the best works of the greatest authors published at prices to make them accessible to working men proves that the intellect is not trained in vain. The morality of Leipzig is not high. We are painfully reminded by the hard work assigned to women, who apparently rank only next above beasts of burden, and whom we have seen yoked with dogs to trucks, that civilization is not women's best friend. She has no friend like Jesus. Where he reigns, peace and happiness are secured and happy. The absence of practical religion is marked. Public worship is sadly neglected. The established religion is Lutheran, and it is only right to add that several of the city pastors are held in repute by those who love the Saviour. Lutheranism, however, has well nigh run to seed. Its ministers more frequently lay stress on the priestism retained by Martin Luther than on the great Gospel doctrines he preached. Evangelicalism is effete if not extinguished. There is little power in the pulpit. For a population of 130,000 there are only six churches. The stage is a mighty influence, and the pulpit. In Leipzig, at least, the world is stronger than the church. We refer above to the rapid growth of Leipzig. In 1792 its population was 30,000—in 1878 it is 130,000! This is a fact which tells its own tale. Christianity is not aggressive here. The world makes large and better and more attractive provision for the admirers of the drama, but the church numbers fewer attendants now than it did three hundred years ago.

We were sorry to find the Baptist place of worship on the outside of this suburb in a back yard, the unfriendly neighbor not allowing any sign-board to tell the uninitiate that the Gospel was preached in the upper room. The room is exceedingly clean and equally comfortable. On the Sunday morning we attended the congregation was small, but we were pleased to hear that at the afternoon service the attendance was large and encouraging. There are a few Baptists in Leipzig who know and love the Saviour; and if they could secure a central meeting-place, easily accessible in all parts of the city, and especially if they could enjoy the constant ministrations of a man like Mr. Geist, who associates heroic fidelity with the truth with ge-hearted sympathies, they would multiply and increase with the increase of God. Our first Sunday in Leipzig was brought to a close by an evening with a good Christian Baptist brother, round whose hospitable table were gathered besides his own family, a Baptist neighbour, their pastor, Mr. Geisler, an English student of theology an American student of music, and the writer. It was a happy season; and after devotional exercises conducted in German,

we united in singing the doxology, each in his own tongue, but all to the praise and glory of God. If our readers should be induced to pray for the few Evangelical Christians in Leipzig, and especially for the Baptists here, our object will be realized, and richer blessings will rest on "the little one" who may become—God hasten the time—"a thousand."

Please explain Genesis vi. 1-5. Who were the sons of God, and who were the daughters of men? I know it is said in the old Testament they are called the sons of God who obey God, but as these are before the flood, also before the promise was made to Abraham, and before the Israelites existed, and also from the fact that there were none saved but Noah's family, it is difficult from these facts for me to understand. Please give me your understanding.

Three interpretations have been given to this passage. 1. It has been explained to mean that the sons of the magistrates or nobles of the land married with the daughters of the low born or common people. 2. That the sons of God were angels, who intermarried with mortals; and 3. That the sons of God were the pious of the earth, those who called upon God in true worship, as the sons of Seth, and who intermarried with godless women, such as the descendants of Cain.

The first hypothesis can not be justified by any parallel usage in the language of Scripture. The "daughters of men" can not, without unwarranted assumption, be understood as plebeian women, in contrast with high-born men. The second hypothesis is equally uncritical. Up to this point in the narrative, and nowhere in the latter historical writings are they called "sons of God." Only in highly poetical or prophetic passages do we find the expression and in these it must not be construed as the parallel of this plain historical statement. The third hypothesis remains as the most satisfactory and harmonious with the context. It is said that after the birth of Enos "men began to call upon the name of the Lord," (ch. iv. 26.) This pious recognition of God brings the descendants of Seth into a filial relation to Him as their Father, and we can readily understand how they should be called "sons of God." On the other hand the ungodly descendants of Cain would naturally be distinguished and socially separated from these. This social distinction which separated the pious and the ungodly was a constantly recognized feature in the ancient economy. For them to intermarry, would unavoidably tend to the production of a lawless and godless race of descendants, and this result is stated to have happened. Afterwards such marriages were positively forbidden, and they are clearly discouraged in the New Testament.

The fact that the world, after this, became ripe for destruction, so far from militating against this explanation, seems rather to harmonize with it. The intermarriage of the godly sons of Seth with the impious daughters of Cain, and the consequent lawless progeny that rapidly increased upon the earth, seems to be an explanation of the enormous development of wickedness, which provoked the destruction by the flood.—Standard.

Congregational Close Communion.

A few years ago we were present at a meeting of an Association of Congregational ministers at which the communion question was under discussion. The subject had been assigned to one of the fathers connected with the Association, who read a paper in which the view was maintained that only church-members should be invited to a seat at the Lord's Supper. In the discussion that followed, the younger brethren expressed their dissent from the view presented in the paper, insisting that the invitation should be extended to all

reason for this extension of the privileges of the communion, that otherwise, as Congregationalists, they had no ground for their assaults upon the close communion of the Baptists. "If we restrict our invitation to church-members," he said, "we stand upon the same ground as they." The point was well made, though it seemed to us, that in a matter concerning one of the ordinances of Christianity, it was utterly unworthy of consideration.

What was so frankly avowed by one Congregationalist has doubtless had its influence in determining the position of other Congregationalists in reference to the communion question. They have seen that to restrict the invitation to the Lord's Table to church-members, is to do just what they decry Baptists for doing, and to bring against themselves the charge of close communion. But the laxity of practice, into which so many have fallen, is at length bringing forth fruit and it proves to be of a kind that is in no slight degree distasteful.

The author of "A Brief Narrative of the Practices of the Churches in New England," writing in 1646, says:

"Though we verily believe there are many precious Saints amongst us, who will their children are under the covenant of Grace, through faith in Christ, whom we tenderly embrace and esteem dear unto us, because they are so to Christ Jesus himself, and are ready to give to such approved ones the right hand of fellowship, in case they shall desire it; yet seeing such are not liable and subject to the churches censure, it is not meet they should partake of the Churches' privileges, therefore we have hitherto foreborn it until further light shall appear."

At that time, and for some time afterward, were so close in their communion that members even of a church of the same faith and order could not participate in the communion, when away from home, without a formal note of the church from which the favour was requested. Subsequently an invitation was extended to "members in good standing of churches in communion with us."—Zion's Advocate.

The Watchman of last week says a good thing or two from its "Watch tower." Here is one on

RESPONSIVE SERVICE.

Drs. Gordon, of Boston, and Budington, of Brooklyn, have each written within a few years in behalf of responsive service. Their views are excellent. But we have had some illustrations of responsive worship of late that neither of these clergymen would relish. It is safe to say that Baptists do not know how to recite the Lord's Prayer in concert, or shout "Amen" with any kind of grace. Indeed, Baptists generally say "Amen" with their feet. In the opening services at the Temple on Martha's Vineyard we noticed that the brethren spoke approval with their feet. The lips were silent but when a good thing was said heavy boots scraped the hallelujahs on the platform floor. There is as much piety in the pedals of an organ as in the ivory keys, and so there may be as much religion in a man's toes as in his lips. Yet it does sound strangely to hear deeply religious sentiments endorsed in that way. Our Methodist friends on the other side of Jordan did not seem to know how to use their feet. The platform might have been carpeted with velvet as far as responsive worship with the feet was concerned. But they know how to use their lips. Ecstatic expressions were as free as the air, and as lawless. The "Amens" came in where they did not belong, and the "Hallelujahs" leaped out when they should have been bottled up. One brother told the Lord that the camp was all surrounded by men and women on their way to death, and "Amen" went thundering up to God. We could not feel devotional under such circumstances, but felt thankful that the good Father could pick it all out, and put the "Amens" where they belonged.

We believe in responses. Better that they should come from the feet than not at all. But is there not a better way than that which begins to prevail among Methodists: A devout and fervent response may give expression to the pent up feelings within, and may aid the speaker who needs the sympathy of the audience, and doubtless would be pleasing to God. But thumping with the feet, crying "Amen" in the wrong place and at the wrong time, or grunting out approbation as some do, are not the best ways. We may remember to have been speaking on one occasion, when a good brother who preached in a Boston pulpit not more than a thousand years ago, sat just in front. We said a good thing, and the brother, with his face glowing, and the tears streaming down his cheeks, exclaimed, "Yes, dear." It was as short, sharp, pious, and fervent as a Methodist "Amen," but irresistibly ludicrous. It saved us, that time. On the whole we think the boots are more reliable than the lips. Boots never make a mistake. They never say just what they don't mean; and yet we are inclined to think that Drs. Gordon and Budington might point out a method of responsive service not open to any of the objections at which we have hinted.

STOLEN SERMONS.

Literary theft is not an uncommon thing. Some newspapers live on the brains of their neighbors. Editors often see their leaders appropriated without one word of credit. But sermon-stealing is not common. Now and then it occurs. A minister who is unable to write his discourses, or is too lazy, steals them. He is generally found out, and in the end is poorer for his theft. Not long ago we listened to a brilliant sermon, the introduction to which we knew had been stolen. For sermon-stealing there is no excuse. It is fraud of the worse kind. Many congregations are satisfied with very poor sermons, and if a man has not brains enough to come up to the low level of the demand, he certainly has no call to preach. The story is told of a young man who stood before a Presbytery in Scotland, asking ordination. Principal Robinson was Moderator. The young man was rigidly examined, and asked to preach. The examination and the sermon were both satisfactory. The candidate retired, and the Moderator said, "I feel compelled to say that the sermon which the young man has preached is not his own. It is taken from an old volume of sermons, long out of print. Where he found it I do not know. I supposed the only copy of the volume to be found was in my library, and the candidate had no access to that. That young man was called in and asked if the sermon he had preached was his own. 'No,' he frankly said, 'I was pressed for time, and could not make a sermon in season. The sermon which I preached was one which I heard Principal Robinson preach some time ago. I took notes of it, and liked it so well that I wrote it out from memory, and have preached it to-day.' Nothing was said; there was nothing to be said.

The Holy Land and the New Protectorate.

The Jewish World in the first of a series of papers on the condition and prospects of the Holy Land under the recent Anglo-Turkish Convention, says: The strategical advantages of the Anglo-Turkish Convention have been already too much canvassed to need any eulogy at our hands; but there are other benefits which will be derived from that memorable Treaty, and these we may allude to as its philanthropic features. The Protectorate of Asia Minor as affording a bulwark against future Russian aggression, would be useless were the present rotten system of administration tolerated in that part of the slaves of rapacious Pashas. It has often been said in this country that